

BURNT IRONDALE RIVER FISH COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT PROJECT



PROJECT GOAL

Ontario Streams assisted the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) in Minden and the Burnt Irondale Fisheries Enhancement Association (BIFEA) with an assessment of the current fish community within Irondale River. This study was intended to provide the BIFEA with the necessary management recommendations to develop a self-sustaining sport fishery.

THE NEED

Historically a well-known Brook Trout fishery, by 1999 anglers in the Irondale River began noticing a decline in the reported catch of this salmonid. An assessment of the current fish community in the river was necessary to develop management recommendations for a self-sustaining sport fishery. To obtain a clear, complete picture of the situation, many biological and physical parameters needed to be measured.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In 1999, a fisheries assessment on the Irondale River, near Bancroft, was completed with assistance from Ontario Streams' staff, volunteers from BIFEA,

and the MNRF. An extensive channel assessment of the study area was conducted from HWY 121 to High Falls Dam. An evaluation of the fish and benthic invertebrate communities, a Brook Trout spawning survey, and the placement of temperature data loggers were also completed.



Ontario Streams' Field Crew Electrofishing in the Irondale River

The project examined both biological and physical factors relevant to Brook Trout habitat and identified limiting factors including high water temperatures caused by among other issues, a local dam. With this information, Ontario Streams prepared a monitoring and assessment program to be used by the BIFEA. An enhancement plan aimed at providing a self-sustaining sport fishery community for the Irondale River was also produced.

PARTNERS

Ontario Streams partnered with the Burnt Irondale Fisheries Enhancement Association and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry in Minden on this project.